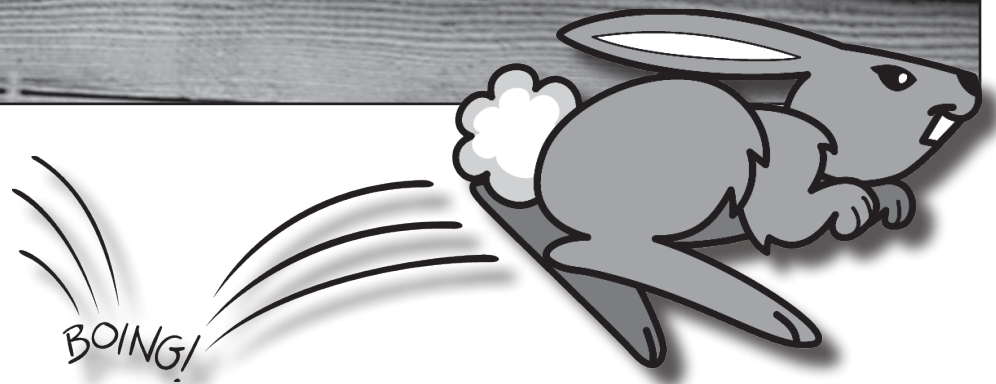




Protect your garden from hungry animals



Homes full of garden beds with blooming flowers and foliage can seem warm and inviting. Planting flowers is one of the easiest ways to transform the appearance of a home with minimal effort and expense. Too often homeowners plant annuals and perennials only to find their hard work has been damaged by hungry animals, like deer, rabbits and underground pests. There are ways to keep animals away from plants -- many of which are humane and environmentally safe.

Keeping furry marauders away from the garden is something individuals who live in rural or suburban areas have to consider when planting. Many communities are growing and encroaching on the natural habitats of wild animals. With some of

their natural food sources diminishing, animals may decide to partake of the easy pickings that come from residential home gardens.

If you understand how these animals feed, you can take precautions to restrict access to planting beds. Rabbits tend to munch on vegetables and ornamental plants. Small in stature and not able to scale fences very easily, rabbits might be deterred by a low fence surrounding plants. Consider digging some chicken wire below the fence a few inches to discourage digging under the fence. The fence should be 18 inches high, and you should keep the openings no more than one inch because rabbits can squeeze through small openings.

In terms of gophers, moles, voles, and other burrowing animals,

the key is preventing underground access. Chicken wire or another abrasive material put under the garden soil can help keep underground animals from burrowing under and then up into the heart of the garden.

Deer are another story altogether. They are tall animals capable of rising up on hind legs to stretch out and reach branches of trees and bushes. Therefore, taller fences may be needed to protect the garden. But these can sometimes be unsightly, especially in a front yard. Therefore, look for natural barriers that can keep them out. They may be deterred by thorny bushes or plants. Daisies, papaver (poppies), narcissus, rudbeckia, achillea, agastache, aster, lupine, coreopsis, verbascum, centaurea, and echinacea are available in

many varieties and are not attractive to deer or rabbits.

Here are some additional strategies that you can try.

- Create narrow pathways between raised beds. Rabbits will feel like they are in prime locations for predators to get at them in this type of situation and may be less likely to venture in. Deer may not be able to navigate narrow paths.

- Use mulch. In addition to benefiting the plants, keeping soil moist and fertilizing the areas, mulch also deters many animals.

- Interplant different species of plants. Some animals don't want to bother picking tasty plants out among other varieties they don't like. So mix plants with ones that animals find unpleasant.

- Use other natural

deterrents. Animals may be kept away by scents of their predators. Urine from coyote, foxes, dogs, and cats may help. You can also try human hair, cat litter and soap flakes.

- Create an animal-friendly area elsewhere. Feed the deer and rabbits

the foods they love somewhere away from your garden. They may fill up with favorites and stay away from your flowers and vegetables.

- Traps may work. As a last resort, use humane traps to collect animals and release them elsewhere.

ACTIVE

CHOICE

Rehabilitation Centre

- Chiropractic
- Rehabilitation
- Acupuncture
- Kinesiology
- Custom Orthotics

Come see us at our new location
19 Mill St. E., Acton
 19 Mill St. E. Acton, ON L7J 1H2
519-853-2244
www.activechoice.ca
Dr. Dana Selby
dr.selby@gmail.com